

## FIGHTING THEM OVER.

What Our Veterans Have to Say About Their Old Campaigns.

## PEACE AT APPAMATTOX.

Flag of Truce That Was Presented in Front of Bartlett's Brigade.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In my readings of your valuable paper, many sketches have come to my notice regarding Lee's surrender, about which I received the first flag, and to what lines presented. Most noteworthy among these was one by Gen. E. W. Whitaker, delivered before the Department of the Potomac, G.A.R., April 9, 1896, at Washington, in which he ignored the possibility of the infantry receiving a flag of truce from the one presented by himself, coming first from Custer's lines.

In view of this, and at the risk of suffering in this friendly contest that has been making its rounds during the past 30 years, I will give my experience on the morning of April 9, 1865, at Appomattox.

About half past 3 o'clock in the morning of April 9 we stretched our tired and tattered sides, and started along the Prospect road from Prince Edward to find Sheridan. About 8 o'clock we found his skirmish-line east of the Lynchburg road, slowly retiring. Our brigade fell right into a little fight and massed there. Gen. Pierce made a



HALT!

two-minute speech, and immediately put us in motion. Filing to the right, we marched through some woods, and crossed a road, where Custer had destroyed a rebel wagon-train. It must have carried at least as many as a pack of Confederate \$100 Missouri bonds, amounting, in all, to \$40,000. Putting them in my otherwise empty haversack, I moved on with the command.

Emerging from these woods, we entered the fields surrounding Appomattox Court-house, and found in line-of-battle, facing northeast. To our left, in front, about three hundred yards distant, stood an old house. Around it and up the slope were posted Gordon's pickets. This house, marked on the maps, is called Wright's House. As soon as we were formed up, I saw a flag of truce, and I saw a flag of truce, and I saw a flag of truce.

Our boys on the left exchanged a few shots with the rebel pickets, the latter retreating out of sight. We expected to see their main line break over the crest, and Bartlett's Brigade broke into double-quick, to the end that they never met them on even footing. Reaching the crest and swinging somewhat to the right brought our lines in front of a tall fence, beyond which was a turnpike running north.

Our lines now faced east, and not west, as I had expected. The first company I saw was white coming up the incline beyond the road. It was a Confederate officer bearing a white flag on the point of his sword. He halted within 50 feet of where I was on the fence, and very excitedly said:

"Where is the commanding officer of these men? Tell him to halt them. Gen. Lee desires hostilities suspended. He is going to surrender."

Gen. Bartlett came dashing down the road, giving the command "Halt!" He was followed by Gen. Pierce and others. Bartlett and the Confederate officer wheeled around and rode off towards Appomattox Court-house. The Confederate wore a full beard—light in color and rather short. He rode a dark-bay horse. I cannot describe the cheering, yelling and hat-tossing that followed.

I will be ready to see that with the knowledge these men had of the country roads and by-ways they would soon have been in his front. As Col. Kautz several times asked the privilege of taking the advance, it will be easily understood what he meant when he said, "I would like to see the rebels take the advance I brought Morgan to bay."

The reader will readily see from what material these forces were made when you take into consideration the fact that the 4th of July to the 19th—R. C. Rankin, Captain, Co. E, 7th Ohio Cav.

**Cheap Transportation.**—From Tampa, Fla., to Sitka, Alaska, for 2 cents—a distance of over 5,000 miles. That is the record Uncle Sam makes when he carries a letter between those points. It is certainly marvellously cheap transportation, and for the money it is certainly the best in the world. There is probably no man who takes a keener interest in postal affairs and who can talk more entertainingly on the subject than Washington Hising, the well-known postmaster of Chicago. His latest report demonstrates that Chicago is destined to become, and that, too, within a few years, the greatest distributing center of mail in the United States, if not in the world. In some of that city's gigantic office buildings many good-sized towns in a week. And out of the population of over 1,500,000 the proportion of Dr. PETER'S BLOOD PURIFIER.

Dr. P. F. Fahney, enjoys the distinction of receiving probably the largest individual mail of any one person living. There is not a railway mail clerk on a route leading to Chicago but what is familiar with that name.—E.

**BEARING THE WHITE FLAG.** The officer bearing the truce to Bartlett's lines was then understood to be Gen. Longstreet's Chief of Staff, but in answer to my inquiry, Gordon's men informed me that it was Gen. Gordon's Adjutant General. My purpose is to make it clear that a Confederate officer presented a flag of truce in front of the 16th Mich., the left wing of Bartlett's Brigade. By the most correct time then at hand, and notes taken on the spot, it was 45 minutes past 3 o'clock, Sunday morning, April 9, when the announcement of surrender was made to Bartlett's Brigade, then assembled on the turnpike.

I will further assert that that truce delayed two minutes longer, there would have been no use for me or Gordon's and Longstreet's muster would have been wiped out. With the bloodhounds of Chamberlin, Pierce, Turner, and Foster making their last spring for the throats of their exhausted enemy, not even a truce appearing to Chamberlin's right could have stopped the left, and the fact that the first flag might have made its appearance to Custer's lines, and conveyed by the gallant Gen. Whitaker through the rebel lines to Chamberlin, cut no figure with Bartlett's Brigade. None other than a Confederate officer stopped us in our last lap.

## BOYS' RECOLLECTIONS.

Commander DeSteele Became a Warrior at a Very Early Age.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: One of the youngest men in the civil war was William DeSteele, Commander of Edwin A. Braun Post, 130, and Captain of George D. Stanton Post, 23, of Fond du Lac, Wis.

William DeSteele was born in Burlington, Wis., April 14, 1850, his parents being Levi and Elizabeth DeSteele. On March 17, 1864, he enlisted. Although he was 13 years old, he was obliged to give his age as 16. Capt. Jas. A. Woodford was recruiting men for the 38th Wis. at Waupun. A number of squads came in and were sent on to Camp Randall, at Madison, where young DeSteele was assigned to Co. D, 38th Wis. He was then 13 years and 11 months old.

Commander DeSteele's story of his experience is very interesting. To the writer recently he said:

"I made three attempts at enlistment, and twice met with rebuffs. I got in with a regiment at Oshkosh, secured possession of a drum, and thought I was sold. The regiment moved, and I was sent back to 'mama.' The next attempt I made I was told to crawl back into my cradle. Nothing daunted, I went to Waupun, and hung around there until St. Patrick's day, March 17, 1864, when I was accepted. Capt. Jas. A. Woodford was recruiting men for the 38th Wis., and we were sent to Camp Randall, Madison, where I was assigned to Co. D.

"Cos. A, B, C and D of the 38th were rushed to the front, under command of Lieut. Col. C. K. Pier. Upon arriving at Washington we were taken in hand by the Sanitary Commission, and my first army experience was to clean up high boots and harness. I was a rough outfit. Here we drew blankets and uniforms, but no arms. The first Sunday in April we marched across the Long Bridge into Virginia, on to Lee's plantation, and our first camp was near Big Springs, right in sight of Alexandria. The next day we drew our arms, and a little were assigned to our regiment. From Alexandria we boarded a transport and old side-wheel tug, went down the Potomac, to the Atlantic. We entered the Pamunkey River, and went ashore at White House Landing.

"We were given no rest, and ordered up a steep bank of 40 or 50 feet, and fought the battle of Cold Harbor, Gaines's Mills, and through to within five miles of Richmond. We had been assigned to Washington to the First Brigade of the Third Division of the Ninth Corps and ordered to report in front of Richmond, with Gen. Burnside in command. We got a position in the First Brigade of the First Division, which we held to the close of the war."

"Our first man killed was Harkley Adams, of Byron. The regiment had resolved to send all our dead back home for burial, each man to chip in to defray expenses. We sent Adams's body home, but he was the only one we did not send them too thick after that to fulfill our resolve."

"Grant's famous swing to the south of Petersburg soon followed, and he uttered those memorable words: 'We'll fight it out on this line, if it takes all Summer.' On the morning of June 16, 1864, we were ordered to march. The first day we marched, we began to hear firing at about 11 a. m., the noise being the sound of cannons which our advance guard had gotten up in front of Petersburg."

"That evening just before dark we arrived on the front line, coming in on the road directly toward the rebel line. The regiment was in four companies and into line-of-battle command of 'Fours' into line-of-battle companies. We were ordered to lie down in some small timber, and lay there for about an hour, and then ordered to charge."

"This was the first time our regiment faced the rebels on the morning of Co. D took that line of work, and then retreated to the next. At 10 o'clock another order to charge was given. At the bank of the Norfolk and Western Railway we got mixed up. It was a steep embankment, and our boys went over it and seemed to just fall off the side and fall into a mud hole. The next day we were excited, and we came near turning on each other. With man on top of man, oaths after oaths went up, and cries of 'Take that gun out of my eye' and 'Here, you punk in the ribs,' filled the air. It took all night to straighten us out. Co. D was wounded by the explosion of a shell. He remained on the field, but the next day he was forced to retire to the hospital, and the command of the regiment went to Maj. Hayward of Oshkosh. The famous 'horseshoe' was then formed in front of the rebel line. We were placed in the line of the first of July and mined from the horsehoe to the front. We were there a month, and then the mine was sprung and the defeat followed in which three divisions were almost entirely wiped out."

"To make a long story short, we supported Sheridan's cavalry at taking of Weldon Road; supported Rorer's battery at battle of Yellow House; fought at Peeble's farm, Poplar Springs Church, and in the Fall returned to our old position and went into Winter quarters and stayed there all winter. The following are brief notes of our 1864-65 campaign. Very old on picket-line. Rebels commenced to come in to our lines. Four Johnnies deserted and came to us to-day. Sent on to prison. They were from the 42d Ala. Regulars. March 25, Gen. John D. Gordon broke through line and took our fort. On April 1, we were sent up to Union Fort Hill (Fort Michael), and at 11 p. m. we marched down to charge Fort Damnation (Fort Mahone). We charged at daylight in gallant style. The glorious news comes, Petersburg captured."

Commander DeSteele had been promoted to the rank of Corporal about the time of the Mine Disaster, but served as Sergeant throughout his career in the army.—SON OF A YET, Fond du Lac, Wis.

**FOR RELIEVING THROAT DISORDERS, COUGHS, AND HOARSENESS.** Only in boxes. Avoid imitations.

**NOT SIDE BY SIDE.** Objection to the Proposition to Inter Rebel Remains in a National Cemetery.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In reply to the statement of the Inspector of the United States Army, that the rebel dead lie in the trenches where they fell and that he recommends they be taken up and interred in the National Cemetery at Lexington, Ky., beside those whom they fought against, and the care of all extended alike by the Government, I will say, let every true soldier who has a drop of loyal blood left in his veins protest that no rebel remains ever be allowed to be deposited in National cemeteries where our dead comrades sleep. They cannot speak for themselves, and we who are so fortunate as to come out of the war alive owe it to them to see that their graves are well guarded.

I was one of the burial party in June, 1865, one year after the battle of Vicksburg. Some 6,000 were picked by our men; not a rebel was found. They were all buried by their friends. One of our men lay 10 feet from a gate, where the inmates of the house passed in and out every day. They suffered the odor before they would let their servants bury him. When asked why they did not bury him a negro replied, "he 'ogs ate him up,' and his boss would not let him touch the remains. No, comrades, this Government has no right to nurse the bones of the rebel dead over the graves of the fallen. Let them lie where they fell; though, for humanity's sake, cover them over decently. The National cemeteries were never intended by this Government to receive the bones of those who fought to dissolve this Union.—MARTIN C. HENNINGSTON, Color Bearer, 7th Mass., Togus, Me.

## A WAR-TIME ATHENS.

Patriotism and Bravery of the People of Wells Valley, Pa.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In May, 1863, you published an account of the part taken in the suppression of the slave-holders' rebellion by the Moore brothers, of Wells Valley, Fulton County, Pa. Their record is a most enviable one, but does not exceed that of the people at large among whom they lived. The valley referred to is seven miles long, and averages one mile wide. It constitutes a Township, in which in 1861 there were registered 102 voters, many of them being infirm old men. There were four churches, the pastors of which were well supported and their services well attended. There were four common schools and one select school. In them young men could be prepared for college, and many were so prepared. These schools were the pride of all the people. There were three post offices, which were served by a weekly mail. There were also a number of newspapers, and periodicals of high grade to nearly every family. No trash was wanted.

On account of the intelligence of the people and the character of their schools, the little valley was known far and near as Athens. When Sumner was fired on there were well employed 10 or 12 men, there were no manufacturers. The whir of busy machinery or click of telegraph instrument were never heard, neither did the shriek of locomotive or thunder of railway train ever wake the echoes sleeping among the crags and valleys of the surrounding mountains.

When Sumner was fired on there was in the valley a well-disciplined and thoroughly disciplined military company, nearly every man of which responded to the President's call for 75,000 men. There were 86 enlistments for three years, and the men were listed under the name of every branch of the service, infantry, artillery, cavalry, signal corps, navy, and medical corps. They were all volunteers.

Those intelligent farm boys had been taught, carefully taught, the lessons of patriotism; the blood of Revolutionary ancestors flowed in their veins; they belonged to their country's history and were proud of her position and record among the nations; therefore the services of the conscription officer were not needed to induce them to support, at any risk, the honor and integrity of the Government under which they lived. They belonged to a great cause, however dangerous or arduous, as they abundantly proved as the great conflict went on.

They were with "Little Mac" during the seven days' battles in front of Richmond and at Antietam; with Meade, in the Pennsylvania Reserves, at Frederickburg, under the sun and great heat, they were placed on the high tide of rebellion at Gettysburg. While the heroic boys of the Army of the Tennessee were bravely contesting the rebel advance at Shiloh, Wells Valley boys, under Buell, were actively marching to the front, and discharged their whole duty on that bloody field during the second day's fighting.

When "Fighting Joe" hurled his battalions against the slope of Lookout Mountain, the White Star Division numbered Wells Valley boys in its ranks. When Little Phil came dashing up to the rebels, and began his grand assault, the boys of the valley were in the front line, ready to help turn defeat into victory. Some of them were with Pat Thomas at Chickamauga, and under the same grand old leader were in the resistless charge on Mission Ridge.

Some of them marched with Sherman from Atlanta to the sea, and so, from the beginning to the end of the war, in every great battle and every many of less importance, some of the boys from the little valley were found. They joined their comrades in the enthusiastic shout over final victory at Appomattox, and proudly marched in the Grand Review at Washington when the great conflict was over.

Those boys bristled not to offer their best services and even life as a sacrifice, in order that national integrity might not be destroyed, and in the case of many of them the offering was accepted and they sealed the full measure of devotion to flag and country with their blood.

The heroism displayed by these young men wherever duty called was equalled, if not excelled, by those who could only encourage and wait and pray at home. The courage which stands the test of bullet and shell and the battlefield is of higher nobility than that of the soldier. The noblest duty is to enable a mother, wife, sister, or brother who is betrothed, to bear the terrible suspense of waiting for the tidings from the battle, from the hospital and from the prison pen? Does it not demand the very highest order of courage for a mother to urge her boy to risk his life in the hands of a cruel war for a principle? Does it not require the same to inspire a loving wife to be willing that her husband shall offer his life for home and country?

The women of this valley did this and more, and there was a true love for the men, who were not found and aiding and encouraging the boys by every means in their power.

But two of those Spartan mothers are yet alive. The sisters and sweethearts, who were so true and noble, are married now, grand and good of them, whose children and grandchildren have been carefully taught the lessons which make patriots of boys and girls.

I have written enough to show of what material the people of this secluded valley were made and a little of the record, in every branch of the service, in every place where men as true, brave and heroic; but is there another place so isolated, with no more people, that furnished so many men for the Union armies? Is there another such place the representatives of which were found in every branch of the service, in every place where men as true, brave and heroic; but is there another place so isolated, with no more people, that furnished so many men for the Union armies? Is there another such place the representatives of which were found in every branch of the service, in every place where men as true, brave and heroic; but is there another place so isolated, with no more people, that furnished so many men for the Union armies? 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